

EMASS RULES EXERCISE

EMASS has been investing in a more thorough certification and training program for our EMASS umpires. As part of this effort, Norm Shacat (Rules coordinator) and Rich Bloom (Umpire coordinator) created this Rules Exercise. It is formulated as an “umpire test” but its main goal is to facilitate a thorough review of the rules that govern our play. To that end, it is an open book test and you can find the answers to all these questions in:

1. the [2022 USA Softball Official Rule Book](#),
2. the [2022 EMASS Senior Softball Playing Rules](#), or
3. the [Rules Forum](#) on the EMASS website.

This exam is not easy. Most of us will require a few hours to complete the 41 question exam. The answers can be found on the EMASS website under the [Downloads tab](#). Look under Team Manager Assets.

Abbreviations Key:

B (followed by a number) = Represents the batter and his place in the batting order

R1 = Runner closest to home plate

R2 = The next runner

R3 = Runner on first with the bases loaded

CR (followed by a number) = Courtesy Runner(s)

F (followed by a number) = Represents fielders: F1- pitcher, F2- catcher, F3- first base, F4 – second base, F5- third base, F6- shortstop, F7- left fielder, F8- left center, F9-right center, F10- right fielder, F11- middle infielder

PLEASE NOTE: In some instances, there could be more than one correct answer.

1. A fake tag is a form of Obstruction. It occurs when the fielder, without the ball, deceives the runner thus impeding their progress. A fake tag can occur when the runner, as a result of the fake tag:

- a. Stops.
- b. Slides.
- c. Slows Down.
- d. All the above.

2. With 1 out, R1 at 3B and R2 at 1B, B4 hits a fly ball to the outfield. Both runners tag up on the play, but R2 left the base early. F7 made the catch and threw to the plate where it was cut off by F5. Realizing R2 left early, F3 yelled across to F5 to throw the ball to him to complete an appeal play. F5 tosses him the ball and the umpire ruled R2 out for the third out of the inning. The team that batted argued that the run should count while the team in the field argued that the run does not count since the runner attempting to get back to first base was a force out for the third out. What should the umpire rule?

- a. The umpire agrees with the team in the field and disallows the run.

- b. The run is credited to the team that batted only because this was a live ball appeal and the force out at first base occurred after the runner had scored. When the team in the field protests the ruling, the umpire educates them that next time they should wait until time is called so they can request a dead ball appeal. In a dead ball appeal, the run would not have counted.
- c. The offense is credited with a run. End of inning.
- d. None of the above.

3. During the game, R1 deliberately and flagrantly crashes into F11 on a close play at 2B. The Umpire, correctly following the rules of EMASS Senior Softball, promptly called R1 automatically out for interference, and ejected R1. Further, he reminded R1's manager to inform him every time the ejected player's position in the batting order comes up since an automatic out occurs each time the disqualified player is supposed to bat. The automatic out is of little consequence to the disqualified player's manager since the ejected player, though a very fast runner, is his worst hitter and is B14 in a 14-player lineup. Later, in the bottom of the 7th inning, 2 outs, with B14's team trailing by 1 with R1 on 2B and R2 on 1B, B13 takes his turn at bat. B13 works the count and is awarded 1B when the 3-2 pitch is ruled flat (ball 4). B14 is the next scheduled batter but he's been disqualified for the remainder of the game. With B14's spot in the order vacated, the umpire declares the third out of the inning and the game over. This is the correct ruling according to EMASS rules.

- a. True
- b. False

4. Leading off the inning, B7 is scheduled to bat but B8 steps into the batter's box. He takes the first pitch for a strike. Suddenly, his manager realizes the mistake and sends B7 up to the plate. The correct ruling by the umpire is:

- a. He rules B8 out for batting out of order, tells the manager and B7 that B7 has missed his time at bat and B9 should now be at bat with one out.
- b. He allows B7 to take his turn at bat with a new count and no outs.
- c. Rules an out but allows B7 to take his turn at bat with a new balls & strikes count.
- d. Neither of the above.

5. With no outs, R1 at 3B and R2 at 2B, B3 hits a shot up the right field line. By the time F10 retrieves the ball R1 and R2 have scored. B3 is rounding 3B and heading home. Suddenly, R2 moves back to the home plate area to instruct B3 to hurry to beat the throw. In doing so, R2 is hit with the thrown ball that, in the umpire's judgment, F2 could have caught in time to record the out at home plate, but the ball deflects away from F2 as B3 scores.

- a. B3 is declared out because of interference.
- b. R2 is declared out for interference, his run disallowed, R1's run which preceded R2's violation counts, and B3 is returned to 3B.
- c. R1 and R2's runs count since they scored before the interference.

d. None of the above.

6. R1 starting at 1B is obstructed between 1B and 2B by F3 on a base hit, then misses 2B as they advance to 3B. The defense properly appeals R1 missing 2B and the umpire should rule:

a. R1 is out for missing 2B. Missing the base takes precedence over the obstruction call.

b. On the obstruction call R1 is protected to 2B and is placed back at 2B.

c. The obstruction call nullifies the appeal and R1 is allowed to stay at 3B.

d. R2 is allowed after the appeal to retouch 2B since they were protected to 2B by the obstruction call.

7. R1 at 1B, B2 hits a line drive to F6 who catches and throws to 1B to try to double off R1. R1 goes back to 1B standing and is hit in the back with the throw from F6 and the ball goes out of play. The correct ruling would be:

a. Dead ball. R1 is awarded 3B as a result of the ball going into dead ball territory.

b. Dead ball. R1 is awarded 2B as a result of the ball going into dead ball territory.

c. Dead ball. No base award is made as R1 prevented F3 from catching the ball by returning standing up.

d. None of the above.

8. R1 at 3B and R2 at 2B with one out. B4 hit a deep fly ball that is caught. R1 foolishly headed home before the catch assuming the ball would carry over F9, returned to 3B where he's pushed (physically assisted) by the third base coach to go home. Meanwhile, R2 properly tagged up and, when the relay is bobbled, scored ahead of a close play at home. The umpire called R1 out for the assistance by the coach and allowed the run scored by R2 to count despite the third out. This is a proper ruling since a coach assisting a runner does not result in a dead ball.

a. True.

b. False.

9. R1 at 3B, R2 at 2B and R3 on 1B with two out. B6 hits a ball to the outfield and is thrown out trying to reach 3B, scoring all three runners prior to the out, but R2 missed 3B. The defense properly appeals the missed base. The correct ruling is:

a. No appeal is allowed as B6 was the third out, all three runs count.

b. R2 is declared out and no runs are allowed to count.

c. R2 is declared out and two runs are allowed to count.

d. R2 is declared out and one run is allowed to count.

10. With a runner on 1B and 1 out, B12 reaches first base safely with his team down by a few runs in the middle innings. His manager considered substituting a Courtesy Runner for him but

figured he'd let him run for himself until he reaches 2B since B13 isn't likely to hit the ball far enough to score him (R2). After the first pitch to B13, the assistant manager implores the manager to replace R2 with CR1 so it will be more difficult for the defense to turn a double play, and the manager sees the logic of this advice and calls time out to substitute CR1 for R1. The umpire should prohibit this since B13's at bat has already started.

- a. True
- b. False

11. R1 on 3B and R2 on 2B with two outs. B5 gets a base hit to right field where F9 fields the ball. R1 has easily scored, but F9's throw to home plate is in time to retire R2 for the third out of the inning. On the throw to home plate, B5 attempted to advance to 2B but his eye was on F9 and he missed 1B. The defense appeals that B5 missed 1B for a fourth out appeal nullifying the run by R1. The correct ruling should be:

- a. The appeal is honored and no runs count.
- b. B5 is called out but R1's run still counts.
- c. R2 was the third out therefore there is no appeal of B5 allowed and R1's run counts.
- d. None of the above.

12. With one out and R1 on 3B and R2 on 2B, B4 hits a very deep fly ball that is caught by F8 who has a notoriously weak arm. R1, thinking the ball will not be caught started for home plate shortly after contact, retreated to 3B when the ball was caught, but never made it all the way back to retouch. He scores easily. The speedy R2 is waived home when the throw from F8 is bobbled by the relay man and also scores. An appeal is made at 3B and the Plate Umpire declares R1 out for leaving early. What is the proper ruling?

- a. This is the third out but R2 scores because this is a timing play.
- b. This is the third out and the defense has the option of making a fourth out appeal to nullify R2's run.
- c. This is the third out and no runs score.
- d. None of the above.

13. An exception to the statement that "a runner cannot be called out between the bases they are obstructed" is:

- a. If they passed another runner.
- b. If they missed a base and it was properly appealed.
- c. If they committed an act of interference.
- d. All of the above.

14. With one out and R1 on 3B and R2 on 1B the batter hit a little bloop behind and a little to the right of second base. F11, running frantically to his left, gets a glove on the ball but the ball pops out of his glove into the air. Speedy R1, a student of the game and seeing that F11's momentum is taking him away from home plate, realizes he can score since F11, even if he makes the catch, will never be in position to throw him out. Therefore, R1 remained on 3B and breaks for home at F11's first contact. Fortunately for the defense, F4 is a hustler and was also attempting to make a play on the bloop by breaking to his right. Seeing the ball pop out of F11's glove, F4 dives and makes a tremendous catch just before R1 is ruled safe at home. Time is called and F5 appeals R1 leaving 3B early, before the catch. You are the umpire, have terrific peripheral vision and saw the moment R1 tagged up, the near catch, and the catch. What is your call?

- You rule R1 out for leaving early, 3 outs.
- You rule R1 safe and award the run, 2 outs.
- You rule the batter safe at first and award the run since a deflected ball cannot be ruled an out even if caught by another fielder.
- You plead the 5th amendment.

15. With R1 on 2B, B2 hits a ground ball to left field. After rounding 1B B2 is obstructed between 1B and 2B, the umpire signals obstruction and in their judgment B2 would have only reached 1B had there been no obstruction. As F7 returns the ball to the infield, B2 returns and touches 1B as R1 suddenly attempts to score from 3B. As a play is made on R1 at the plate for the first out of the inning, B2 attempts to advance to 2B and is thrown out.

- Once R1 is thrown out, a dead ball is called and B2 is awarded 1B.
- Once R1 is thrown out, a dead ball is called and B2 is awarded 2B.
- Both R1 and B2 remain out as a result of the play.
- Once B2 is thrown out, a dead ball is called and B2 is awarded 1B. R1 remains out.

16a. While the umpire assigned to the game was normally vigilant about ensuring loose equipment was never left within live ball territory, in this instance a bat belonging to someone on the team at bat was on the playing field leaning up against the fence near where on deck batters wait their turn to bat. With R1 on 1B, B6 singled to F7 who threw the ball to F5. There was little risk that R1 would test F7's arm so F7 held the ball until R1 reached 2B and was assured he'd stop, & made a soft throw to F5. The throw bounced in front of F5 and eluded him. With no one backing up the throw, the ball began to roll toward the fence in front of the third base bench so R1 begins to run to 3B. The ball strikes the bat still leaning against the fence. The umpire:

- a. Allows play to continue since there was nobody backing up the throw, R1 was going to easily reach 3B safely anyway, and the ball hitting the bat had no impact on the play according to the judgment of the umpire.
- b. Calls a “dead ball” and awards R1 home plate since this is an example of a “blocked ball” and the overthrow rule applies (it’s treated the same as if the throw had gone out of play and the runner had already reached 2B when F7 made the throw).
- c. Calls a “dead ball” and since no play is apparent, the runner must return to the last base touched at the time of the dead ball (2B).
- d. None of the above.

16b. Similar situation as 16a, but this time the team on the third base side is the team in the field and the bat belongs to them. The throw from F7 strikes the bat left leaning against the fence in the field of play when the team took the field. The umpire:

- a. Allows play to continue since there was nobody backing up the throw, R1 was going to easily reach 3B safely anyway, and the ball hitting the bat had no impact on the play according to the judgment of the umpire.
- b. Calls a “dead ball” and awards R1 home plate since this is an example of a “blocked ball” and the overthrow rule applies (it’s treated the same as if the throw had gone out of play and the runner had already reached 2B when F7 made the throw).
- c. Calls a “dead ball” and since no play is apparent, the runner must return to the last base touched at the time of the dead ball (2B).
- d. None of the above.

17a. With R1 on 1B, B2 hits a long fly ball to deep left center field. R1, thinking the ball will not be caught, runs and rounds 2B. F8 makes an amazing catch and throws the ball back to 1B to appeal R1 leaving early. When the throw is released, R1 is between 2B and 3B. The ball gets by F3 and goes into dead ball territory. When the ball enters dead ball territory R1 is between 2B and 1B on their way to tag up at 1B. R1 retouches 1B. What is the proper award?

- a. R1 is awarded 2B.
- b. R1 is awarded 3B.
- c. R1 is awarded Home.
- d. R1 is returned to 1B.

17b. This is identical to 17a. R1 had not, in fact, tagged up properly. He left early and was between 2B and 3B when F8 makes the throw to F3. After the throw from F8 goes into dead ball territory with R1 still between 2B and 1B, the umpire rules the ball dead. With the ball now dead, the defense makes a dead ball appeal on R1 leaving 1B early. The umpire has some choices to make before ruling. The umpire should:

- a. Rule immediately on the appeal and call R1 out.
- b. Hesitate and observe whether R1 is still intending to retouch 1B before announcing the award.
- c. If R1 retouches 1B, award R1 home plate.
- d. If R1 does not retouch 1B, call R1 out.

18. B7 leads off the inning, swings, and barely makes contact. His dribbler first contacts the strike mat before bouncing in front of the plate. At contact, B7 darts up the baseline dropping his bat just as he leaves the batter's box. The pitcher and catcher move on the ball. The pitcher yells to the catcher, "Let it go" since there's little chance the catcher can throw out B7 and the ball appears to be heading towards foul territory. But instead of rolling foul, the bat and ball make contact for the second time in fair territory, and the ball stops. The umpire rules:

- a. Dead ball, batter out.
- b. Declares a foul ball.
- c. Indicates fair ball and calls the play dead once the batter-runner has safely crossed the alternate first base.
- d. The batter is out for discarding their bat in a manner that prevents the defense from making a play on the ball.

19a. R1 is on 2B, R2 is on 1B and B3 is up with no outs. He hits a ball in the hole between shortstop and 3B that's fielded by F5 going to his left. The play is set up perfectly for a potential triple play with the slow-footed B3 now the batter-runner. All F5 needs to do is tag R1 who is quickly headed in his direction, throw to F11 covering second, and F11 completing the dream play by throwing out B3 at first. But R1 ruins F5's plan when he suddenly stops and begins to back-pedal away from F5. F5 has to settle for a double play, instead. F5 and his teammates contend that since R1 was forced, he cannot step back towards 2B and must be ruled out for his method of avoiding being tagged by the fielder. The team on defense is correct. While the tactic often occurs in baseball, it is prohibited in slow-pitch softball.

- a. True
- b. False

19b. Similar to 19a, this time R1 on 2B is the only runner and he's not forced. This time, F5 thinks he's going to be able to turn a double play despite the fact that there's no force because his momentum is taking him towards R1 and R1's momentum is taking him towards F5. F5 envisions tagging R1 and making the throw to first in time to turn an unusual double play. R1 again steps back towards 2B and the only play F5 is assured of is throwing out B3 at 1B. F5 and his teammates again argue that according to the rules of slow-pitch softball, R1 should be ruled out for stepping back towards any base to avoid or delay a tag by the fielder. The team on

defense is correct. While the tactic often occurs in baseball, it is prohibited in slow-pitch softball.

- a. True
- b. False

20. F11 is positioned in left-center field when B4 comes to bat with the bases loaded. B4 hits a line drive over F5's head that seems destined for the left-field corner. F11 might be able to cut it off. His best bet is to dive head first, but at his age he's not up to the task. Instead, he instinctively slides feet first in the hope that he can stop the ball with his body and possibly prevent a bases clearing hit. The ball deflects off F11's foot and rolls out of play. B4 is very fast and was already taking the turn to 2B when F11 made contact with the batted ball, and by time the ball rolled out of play, R1 had scored, R2 was heading home, and R3 was approaching third base. Accordingly, the umpire should make a judgment call and award B4 third base and 3 runs.

- a. True
- b. False

21. R1 is slow and R2 has visions of scoring on the hit by B7. R1 hesitates at third base and B2, with no intention of stopping there, yells for him to go and pushes him. Who should be called out for interference?

- a. R1
- b. R2 for assisting him.
- c. Both.
- d. Neither. A player is not guilty of interference for assisting another runner.

22. R1 is on 3B, R2 is on 1B with 2 outs. B5 singles to right field scoring R1 and advancing R2 to third. F11 alertly noticed that R2 missed 2B so after the umpire calls time out, he appeals R2 at 2B for missing the base. The umpire saw it too and calls R2 out for the third out and waives off the run. This is the correct call.

- a. True
- b. False

23. A foul tip is a batted ball that goes directly from the bat to the catcher's glove or hand(s), and is legally caught by the catcher. The batter is only out if they have 2 strikes on them at the time of the foul tip because such contact does not result in the ball being over the batter's head.

- a. True
- b. False

24. B1 hits a ground ball between F5 and F6, F6 backhands it and makes a surprisingly strong throw to F3. In the judgment of the umpire the ball was caught by F3 with his foot on 1B at the exact moment B1's foot touched the alternate first base. The rule book stipulates that if, in the judgment of the umpire, the umpire believes it was a tie, they shall rule the batter-runner safe at 1B (or at any other base where there is a potential force out).

- a. True

b. False

25. As fate would have it, B7 is up again. This time, R1 is on 2B and speedy CR2, is on 1B. On the play mentioned in question 18, B7 pulled his hamstring running to 1B. And the poor guy again barely makes contact and hits another fair batted ball in front of home plate. Hitting right-handed he starts trudging to 1B inside the first base line and has now clearly made it well past the half-way mark. The catcher pounced on the ball and threw to F3 hitting the batter-runner on the shoulder about 10-15 feet short of 1B and still fully inside the baseline. The umpire calls dead ball and rules interference on B7 calling him out. At the time of the interference, R1 had not yet reached 3B but CR2 clearly reached 2B. Where do we place R1 and CR2?

- a. R1 on 3B and CR2 at 2B.
- b. R1 on 3B and CR2 on 1B.
- c. R1 on 2B and CR2 on 1B.
- d. None of the above.

26. The team at bat had 14 players in their batting order. When B13 led off the inning and got on base, B3 substituted for him as a Courtesy Runner. Soon, it became apparent that this was a mistake when B2 popped out to F6 (infield fly rule) for the innings first out with the bases loaded and CR1 (B3) was still on base. B3 is scheduled to bat. How does the umpire handle this:

- a. He allows a Courtesy Runner to enter the game and replace CR1 so he can bat.
- b. He calls CR1 out at 3B and allows him to bat as scheduled. B4 on deck.
- c. CR1 remains on 3B, but B3 as the batter is ruled out and B4 now bats with the bases loaded, 2 outs.
- d. None of the above.

27. Bases are loaded with no outs and B9 hits a pop up in the infield. The umpire correctly calls out, "Infield fly rule, batter out if fair," but the ball descends and hits the pitching screen before it's touched by an infielder. The umpire rules "dead ball, no pitch." This is the correct call.

- a. True
- b. False

28. R1 on 1B with one out. B3 hits a line drive to F1 who catches the ball in the air. R1 left 1B on contact and was on his way to 2B when the ball was caught. F1 throws the ball to F3 at 1B, but his throw is off line, but caught. F3 steps on the alternate first base an instant before R1 slides into first base. What is the proper ruling in EMASS?

- a. R1 makes it back to 1B before F3 touches the regular first base so R1 should be called safe.
- b. If a throw pulls F3 off 1B, he can legally touch either the alternate or regular first base so R1 should be called out.
- c. R1 is safe because F3 failed to tag him out sliding back into first base.
- d. None of the above.

29. In games played in Medfield, each team is limited to 4 over-the-fence home runs per game. With his team already blasting 3 homers over the fence in the first game of the doubleheader, B3

hits a long drive up the line that is nearly caught by the leaping F7, but it pops out of his glove and over the fence. What happens if someone on that team hits another ball over the fence?

- a. It's a home run.
- b. It's a single and all runners forced advance one base.
- c. It's a dead ball out.
- d. None of the above.

30a. With a count of 1 ball 2 strikes on the batter, F1 delivers a pitch that, in the umpire's judgment, was of excessive speed and an illegal pitch, but the batter swung and fouled it off for strike 3. The umpire's recourse was:

- a. Calling it no pitch. The batter shouldn't be penalized for facing a pitch that was so fast that the umpire had no chance to call it illegal before the batter had to decide whether to swing or not.
- b. Ejecting the pitcher for violating the Code of Conduct.
- c. There is no recourse. The batter is out.
- d. None of the above.

30b. The same situation as 32a. After the pitch, the umpire shall issue a warning to the pitcher for delivering the pitch with excessive speed. But later in the game, the pitcher delivers another pitch with excessive speed. The umpire should:

- a. Eject the pitcher.
- b. Give the pitcher another warning and on the next violation eject the pitcher.
- c. Disqualify the pitcher.
- d. Remove the pitcher from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.

31. In games played in the Atlantic and National divisions, if both starting pitchers agree to play without the Pitching Screen, they are allowed to do so. In the pre-game conference, the home plate umpire needs to confirm with the managers of each team whether their pitchers require the use of the Pitching Screen during the game.

- a. True
- b. False

32. Team B, the home team, trails Team A 16-3 at the end of 6 innings of play. Before Team A leaves the field to bat, the umpire shall instruct them to remain in the field since Team B will bat again in the top of the 7th inning (flip-flop).

- a. True
- b. False

33. Team A, the visiting team trails 12-2 after 5 innings. They fail to score in the top of the 6th. The umpire instructs Team B to stay in the field so Team A can bat again. This is the correct application of the "flip-flop" rule.

- a. True
- b. False

34. In the EMASS Metro Division, our rules stipulate the minimum number of players the defense must have playing in the outfield at the time the pitch is released, but there is no limit to the number of players allowed to be positioned in the outfield.

- a. True
- b. False

35. Two umpire system with R1 at 2B and R2 at 1B, B3 hits a ground ball base hit into left field and R1 attempts to score and R2, on the throw to F2, attempts to reach 3B. The throw home is cut off by F5 and he throws to F6 covering 3B to make a play on R2. Which umpire is responsible for the call at 3B?

- a. Base umpire.
- b. Plate umpire.
- c. Whoever has the best angle?
- d. Whichever umpire can get closest to 3B.

36. Two umpire system, there is a close play at 1B, but the base umpire is blocked from seeing the entire play. The base umpire should:

- a. Make a call based on the information they have.
- b. When the play is over, go to their partner for information to get the call correct.
- c. Only go to their partner when requested to do so by a coach or player.
- d. Both a and b are correct.

37. The weather forecast called for a 40 percent chance of scattered thundershowers in the morning. When players arrived at the field, they were pleased to be greeted to mostly clear, sunny skies. But as teams were completing batting practice on the basketball court field @ 9:50, there was a very audible rumble of thunder. One ominous looking cloud behind the backstop had been hidden from view by the trees behind the backstop, but it appeared to be moving away. The umpire ordered everyone to return to their cars / seek shelter and said the start of the game would be delayed. No rain fell on the field. Those who pulled out their cell phones and checked their weather apps saw the cell causing the thunder and the app showed it moving away from the field. The closest lightning strike according to the app was 5 minutes ago and 3.5 miles away. On his way to his car at 9:56, the umpire heard another less audible rumble of thunder in the distance. What is the earliest the umpire (and managers) can allow players to return to the field?

- a. Provided the sky is cloudless, as soon as the cloud is no longer visible.
- b. 10:20.
- c. 10:26.
- d. 10:26 unless a weather app shows no lightning strikes within 6 miles in the last 10 minutes, whichever comes first.